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The Computer Rag

newsletter of the
YOKOSUKA COMPUTER CLUB

News, Gossip
and Innuendo
from the
Western
Pacific

Local Gossip

Notice: return your surveys (in the back of last month's **The Computer Rag**) by Sept. 10 or you will vanish from the newsletter mailing list. If you want more news, gossip, and innuendo -- send in the survey! This information will be used to print a new membership directory.

September Meetings: will be held on the second Wed., Sept. 11, and the third Tues., Sept. 17, both at 6 p.m. in OEC (top floor of Barracks C). The Wed. meeting will feature something or other on the Mac, as well as demonstrations of public domain software in the club library. The Tues. meeting will feature AppleWorks, with maybe a bonus demonstration of Mousepaint.

Elections: were not held in June, July, or Aug. because of low attendance. Actually, lots of people came to the meetings, but very few of them were members. Suggestions on how to coerce the membership into participation would be most welcome by any club officer.

Sale: the club will discontinue disk sales in Sept. and sell existing stock at nice prices!

A-33 started a big Apple IIc sale around the time the newsletter went to press. By the time you see this, it may be over, but if you want a IIc, cross your fingers and drop by...

Misawa's computer club has a computer bulletin board up and running at 226-5213. Camp Zama hopes to have a board running by Dec. on an IBM PC with 10 Mbyte hard disk.

Non-Local Gossip

Hardcard is a new gadget by Plus Development Corp. -- a 3.5" 10 Mbyte hard disk on an expansion card for an IBM PC, for \$1095. It uses just 10.9 watts, so shouldn't present any problem with the power supply.

Window wars: Microsoft Windows uses 128K, IBM's Topview uses 147K, and Digital Research's GEM requires 169K. These requirements are, of course, in addition to the memory needed for any programs running under these "environments."

Rana Systems, once a leading Apple II drive maker, has vanished.

Atari claims it will sell a CD-ROM for \$500 -- which is old news. What is new is Atari's plan to have the disk drive function as both a data storage unit (500 megabytes or so) and as a music player, playing standard music CDs.

Epson is replacing its popular FX-80 series, the most successful printer line ever sold, with the new FX-85 and FX-185, \$499 and \$699 respectively. These offer 32 CPS in NLQ, 160 CPS in draft, come with an 8K print buffer, and a new control panel replaces the hard-to-reach DIP switches.

Apple plans for 85-86 [an approved list of rumors]: 1) a 10 to 20 Mbyte hard disk drive for the Mac; 2) a new, high-end Mac with slots, 2 megabytes of memory, new ROM, and modular style (as in separate, larger monitor); 3) a new Imagewriter II printer with built-in sheet feeder; 4) a 16-bit Apple II using the 65816 chip; and 5) a 3.5" 800K double sided disk drive for both the Apple II and Mac.

Cheery thought for clones: "compatible," in the original Greek, meant to "suffer with."

Computer Faire

Yokosuka Computer Club's Second Annual Computer Faire has been scheduled for Sat., Nov. 2. The location has not been set, but we'll try for the Coffee House again. We hope to have: Apple II+ clone, IIe, IIc, Macintosh; Radio Shack Mod 4, 100; IBM PC; Zenith Z-120, 150; Atari 800; Commodore 64, 128; NEC 9801; and maybe (?) a Commodore Amiga and Atari 520ST. Call 234-4326 if you have ideas.

Just a few: IBM has admitted there may be something wrong with as many as 10% of all PC AT hard disk drives. There is no official comment as to why over 60% have required repairs -- maybe they were hypochondriacs.

Forget it! IBM has officially denied there is anything called an IBM PC2. So many customers were putting off purchases, waiting for a machine to replace the aging PC, that IBM broke tradition and stated flat out -- no new PC in 1985. IBM claims it made the announcement because competitors were being hurt by the rumors. Others point out IBM has never cared how competitors feel, and suggest a backlog of 600,000 PC and PC XT's might have something to do with this. Still others, cynics to the end, say IBM is pulling a fast one: there will be a PC2, but IBM changed the name to something else.

Verbatim, now owned by Kodak, is working on an erasable 3.5" laser disk, with 100 Mbyte capacity, to be ready by late 1987. They already have a working 40 Mbyte prototype.

Viasyn Corp. (CompuPro in disguise) recently took over the old Osborne Computer Corp. headquarters. To drive away "Chapter 11 leftovers," the company hired a white-bearded wizard to wander around the halls, chanting and spreading magic dust, while the theme song to "Ghostbusters" was played.

Seequa Computer Corp., which held off bankruptcy with a massive last-second contract to supply Federal Data Corp. with 36,000 portable computers [which will in turn be supplied to the Navy and Air Force] is having great fun. The FCC held a surprise raid on the company and seized every Seequa machine in the building, claiming they were either untested by the FCC or violated FCC electromagnetic interference standards. Seequa was repeatedly warned about the problem, but "blatantly" ignored the FCC. Violations are punishable by \$2000-5000 fines per machine. On the good side, Seequa will not be making the machines Federal Data will supply under the Navy contract -- these will be made by Televideo. [Clear?]

Ashton-Tate (of dBASE II, III, and Framework fame) has purchased Multimate, makers of the very popular Multimate word processing package.

UMIDS: the Navy has installed over 100 Uniform Microcomputer Disbursing Systems, consisting of a Z-120 with 256K, a 10 Mbyte hard disk, CP/M-86, Okidata 83 printer, Diablo 630 printer, uninterruptible power supply, and paper tape punch. [Paper tape punch???

Off with their heads! "Hackers" in Britain have broken into Prestel, British Telcom's videotex system. Among their various crimes were reading Prince Philip's electronic mail, and sending E-mail out to royal friends using Philip's code. Long considered just slightly brighter than the horses he enjoys riding, Philip is actually a closet hacker himself, using a Hewlett-Packard computer given to the royal family by Pres. Reagan on a trip to the U.S. a few years ago.

Bye-Bye: "From an operational viewpoint, there is no role, either today or tomorrow, for Steve Jobs at this company." --Apple President John Sculley. For all you Steve Jobs fans (all six of you), this doesn't sound so good...

Only 6 million left: Steve Jobs has sold 850,000 shares of Apple stock, bringing in around \$14-18 million. Some say he wants to start a new company that won't fire him, others say he wants to use it for politics, and still others say he owes a lot of money on real estate deals and his VISA card. He still owns almost 10% of all Apple stock, making him the biggest shareholder.

Nix NEX: Apple is being severely criticized in the U.S. by dealers near military bases. Dealers claim Apple sales at exchanges are hurting their business, and exchange personnel are not qualified to sell computers. Considering the average level of expertise of your typical computer dealer, this argument is not very believable...

Option Board, a small \$95 card for the IBM PC made by Central Point Software, is supposedly capable of backing up any PC software except Prolok-protected packages. [Prolok burns a special hole in the disk with a laser.] Central Point also makes superb backup programs for the IBM PC, Apple II, Commodore-64, and Macintosh. **1-2-3 and dBASE II:** Adam Osborne, founder of Paperback Software, says VP-Planner, a 1-2-3 clone, will be out in Sept. for \$99.95. VP-Planner can do almost everything 1-2-3 can do, and also read dBASE II files. Unlike 1-2-3, it does not use memory or disk space to store empty cells, and can be used on a hard disk.

Commodore's Amiga: offers a choice of 4096 colors, and comes with 256K, 89-key keyboard, 3.5" 880K disk drive, and mouse for \$1295. Included are RGB digital and analog ports, TV port, two controller ports, two stereo/audio ports, one serial and one parallel port. A 14" RGB monitor is \$495, an external drive is \$300, and a 512K memory upgrade is \$200. Someone really should buy one and bring it to a meeting...

Frankie Returns: Franklin Computer Corp. has released the Franklin 2000, a \$795 machine with 128K, no disks, a parallel port, detachable keyboard, and 80 column card. For \$945 you can get the 2100, which includes a 170K disk drive, and for \$1095 you can get the 2200 with two 170K disk drives. In case you are wondering how an Apple-compatible can get 170K on a disk, the Franklins will be using FDOS-2, which uses 40 tracks on a disk, rather than the 35 tracks on a standard Apple II disk. Apple may, someday, sell FDOS-2 for its own machines.

Phillip D. Estridge, who headed IBM's Entry Systems Division when it developed the PC, PC XT, PC jr and PC AT, was killed Aug. 2 in the Delta Airlines crash in Dallas. At least one magazine publisher sincerely believes the crash was an IBM office politics plot to get rid of Estridge, who started with nothing but IBM's name five years ago and turned it into a \$5 billion a year segment of IBM's business.

Faster: Microsoft has finished Macintosh Microsoft BASIC 2.1. The new version works just like the old version, but is 50% faster. [Benchmark results listed later in the newsletter can be cut in half under 2.1. Exactly how owners of 2.0 can get 2.1 is less clear.]

June was a bad month for IBM, as IBM PC's dropped from first to fourth place in unit sales -- a first. Macintosh machines were most popular, followed by IIe and IIc machines.

AT&T has signed a \$946 million contract with NSA (the National Security Agency). This is believed to be AT&T's largest computer order -- ever -- as well as one of the strongest UNIX purchase agreements ever, since all the machines sold run under UNIX. Soviet spies should sign up now for courses in C.

MicroPro has released WordStar 2000J, a "bilingual" wordprocessor capable of writing Japanese and English on the same screen and printing the result on a dot-matrix printer. At present, WordStar 2000J works only on the NEC 9801, but MicroPro intends to have an IBM JX version out sometime next year.

San Diego Scientific (815 Third Ave. Suite 301, Chula Vista, CA 92011) is selling the Gemini board for \$599. With this board, a Zenith Z-120 can run unmodified IBM PC software, including Flight Simulator (without sound). They also have an 8 MHz 8087 chip for \$125, and a Turbo Speedup option for \$25.

Running out of memory? Try LISP Machine's new Moby Address Space, a software tool which allows 2 to the 50th 64-bit words (enough to fill 2 billion 500 Mbyte drives). The package only works on a LMI Lambda LISP Machine (darn).

Frac Whats? Shown below is a 7th order fractal landscape. Fractals are math formulas useful for creating landscapes (as in Star Trek, Star Wars, etc. movies). It took a Fat Mac almost 20 minutes to build this landscape.



Level 7

Benchmarks: benchmarks are programs designed to compare different computers in terms of performance. The BASIC programs listed generate prime numbers, and give the following results when run:

Listing 1

Radio Shack Model 100 32K: 4 min. 52 sec.
Macintosh 512K: 2 min. 6 sec. (MBASIC 2.0)

Listing 2

Radio Shack Model 100 32K: 15 sec.
Macintosh 512K: less than 6 sec.

Listing 2 modified

(apostrophe before PRINT in line 110)
Radio Shack Model 100 32K: less than 8 sec.
Macintosh 512K: less than 3 sec.

Listing 3

This is identical to Listing 2, except it has been modified to run under Microsoft BASIC 2.0 on the Macintosh. Both Listing 2 and 3 will run on the Mac without modification, but notice Listing 3 does not have line numbers, and BASIC keywords are automatically shown in bold face.

Benchmarks are tricky little devils, since a good score on a benchmark doesn't necessarily mean a machine is better at a particular task. The Model 100, for example, is far, far more accurate than most computers because it uses binary coded decimal (BCD) math. Such coding, however, takes extra processing time, slowing the machine. Also slowing the machine is the liquid crystal display (LCD), which simply cannot display information as rapidly as a standard cathod ray tube (CRT).

On the Macintosh, BCD math really slows things down, in spite of the high-speed processor. While most computers are accurate to only two to four decimal points, and the Model 100 is accurate to sixteen decimal points, the Mac has eighty decimal point accuracy. Some people wonder why, since even interplanetary satellite missions are calculated out to only twenty decimal points or so.

Benchmarks also mask special machine capabilities. For example, on an Apple II, most Radio Shack machines, any Commodore, or any IBM, the Microsoft string commands are limited to 255 characters, as in:

```
100 PRINT STRING$(255,65)
```

which prints "A" 255 times. But on a Macintosh, strings can be much longer, allowing such commands as:

```
PRINT STRING$(32767,65)
```

which will print "A" 32,767 times.

Listing 1

```
5 REM Sieve Byte 9/84 p. 33
10 SIZE=7000
20 DIM FLAGS(7001)
30 PRINT "START"
40 COUNT=0
50 FOR I=0 TO SIZE
60 FLAGS(I)=1
70 NEXT I
80 FOR I=0 TO SIZE
90 IF FLAGS(I)=0 THEN 170
100 PRIME=I+I+3
110 K=I+PRIME
120 IF K>SIZE THEN 160
130 FLAGS(K)=0
140 K=K+PRIME
150 GOTO 120
160 COUNT=COUNT+1
170 NEXT I
180 ?"DONE:";COUNT;" PRIMES FOUND."
```

Listing 2

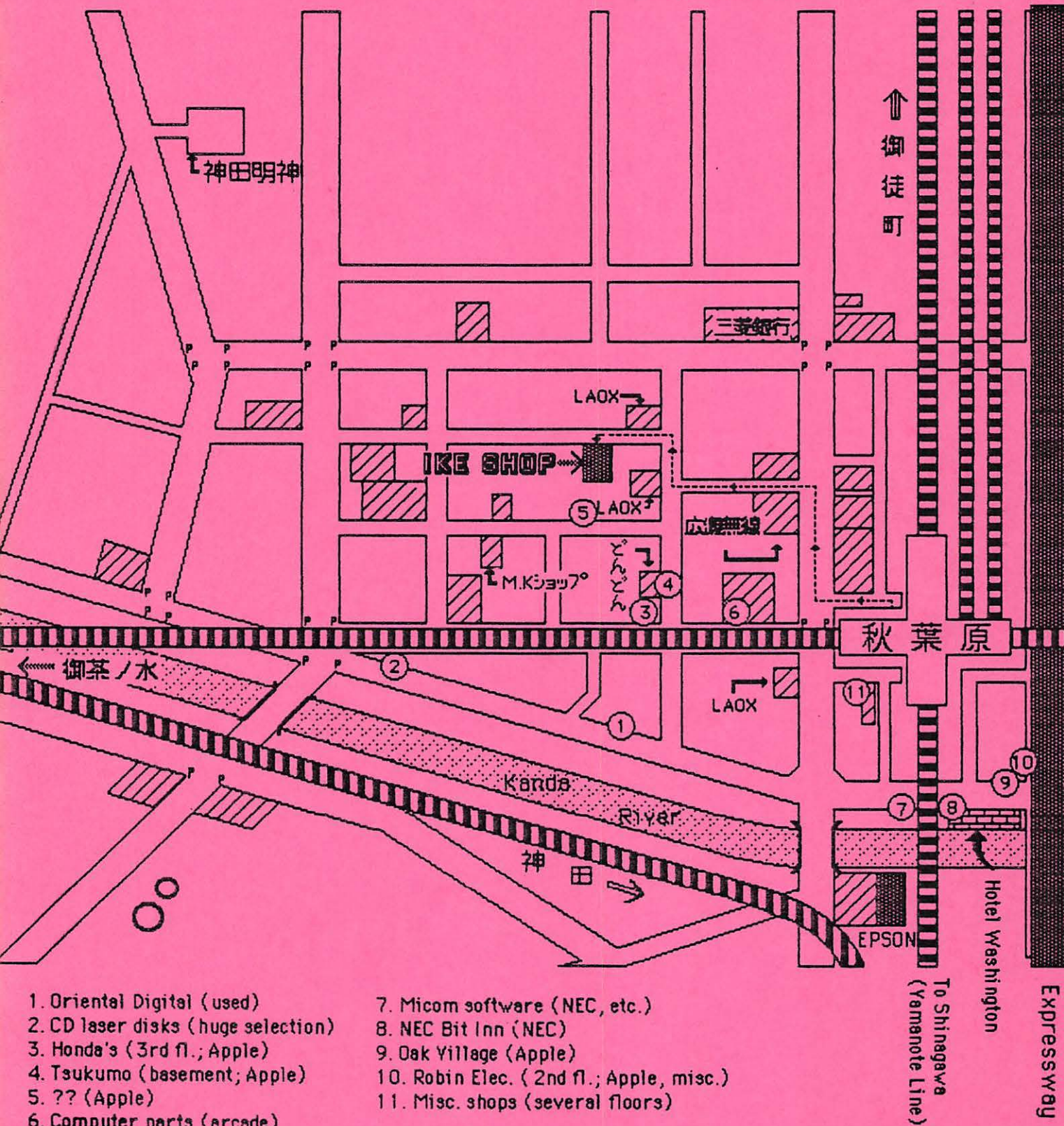
```
10 CLS
20 PRINT"Sieve of Eratosthenes -- Prime
Number Generator"
30 DIM N(1000)
40 PRINT 2;
50 FOR P=3 TO 997 STEP 2
60 IF N(P) THEN 120
70 IF P>31 THEN 110
80 FOR D=P*P TO 997 STEP 2*P
90 N(D)=1
100 NEXT D
110 PRINT P;
120 NEXT P
```

Listing 3

```
WIDTH 55:CLS
PRINT"Sieve of Eratosthenes -- Prime Number
Generator"
DIM N(1000)
PRINT 2;
FOR P=3 TO 997 STEP 2
  IF N(P) THEN loop
  IF P>31 THEN show
  FOR D=P*P TO 997 STEP 2*P
    N(D)=1
  NEXT D
  show:PRINT P;
loop:NEXT P
```


Akihahara

1. Take red kanji KHK train to Shinagawa.
2. Go to ticket window, ask for "Akihabara."
3. Take Yamanote Line train in direction of Tokyo St.
4. Akihabara is 2nd station past Tokyo.
5. At Akihabara, go DOWN to leave station.
6. Send suggestions, additions to newsletter editor.



Portions of map compliments of Ike Shop,  (03) 251-4722

